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MEETING LOG  
DIRECTORATE FOR ENGINEERING SCIENCES

SUBJECT: Discussion of Gas Research Institute Activities  
Supporting Development of Standard Test Methodology  
to address the Water Heater Flammable Vapor  
Ignition Issue

PLACE: CPSC Headquarters, 4330 East West Highway,  
Bethesda, MD 20814

MEETING DATE: February 25, 1997

LOG ENTRY SOURCE: Donald W. Switzer *DWS*

ENTRY DATE: February 26, 1997

COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

Donald W. Switzer	ES
William H. King, Jr.	ES
Jim Hoebel	ES

NON-COMMISSION ATTENDEES:

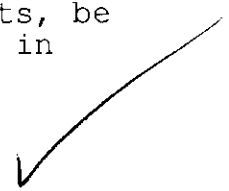
Ken Kazmer	Gas Research Institute
Bob Hemphill	Gas Research Institute

MEETING SUMMARY

Mr. Hemphill requested this meeting to discuss issues pertaining to the issue of water heater ignition of flammable vapors. Specifically, Gas Research Institute (GRI) requested information on three topics; 1) the schedule for staff status reports to the Commission, 2) what requirements staff views as critical to the final test methodology for vapor ignition-resistant water heaters, and 3) the process by which the Commission considers rulemaking.

Issue 1: Staff explained that there is currently no set schedule for status reports. However, staff indicated that it has been instructed to notify the Commission if progress becomes unsatisfactory in developing the standard, or if an insurmountable difficulty is encountered in developing the standard.

Issue 2: Staff explained that the test methodology should be "technology blind", and subject each different technology to the same level of stress. The test method should also provide consistent results, be safe, and easy to perform. It is critical, in staff's view, that vapors be documented to



completely surround the appliance so all possible ignition locations are in contact with the vapors.

Issue 3:

Staff explained the process of preparing briefing and options packages for the Commission. Staff explained that there is a comment period in the scheduling for rulemaking to allow industry and public comment on proposed rules. GRI is exploring whether to comment on a soon to be published CPSC ANPR on requirements that petroleum distillates be packaged in child resistant containers. GRI believes it may be appropriate to comment on the ANPR, suggesting the requirements be extended to gasoline cans to prevent children from opening the cans and causing spills which are ignited by gas-fired appliances. Staff suggested GRI contact the Office of the General Counsel for advice as to whether the PPPA covers gasoline containers. Staff offered to provide GRI with a copy of a CPSC report on the issue of gasoline cans.